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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF ETHNICITY IN GERMAN IMMIGRANTS' HOMES

By

©

KORNELIA JUTTA DORIS NELLE

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

Edmonton, Alberta
Fall 1993

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF ETHNICITY IN GERMAN IMMIGRANTS' HOMES submitted by KORNELIA JUTTA DORIS NELLE in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS.

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August 24, 1993

ABSTRACT

This thesis discusses ethnicity in the homes of post-World War II German immigrants in Edmonton. Four aspects of ethnicity were selected for the study: Values, Language, Material Items, and Foodstyles. Following F. Barth's interpretation, ethnicity is regarded as an expression of boundaries between two or more ethnic groups. The expression of ethnicity is also understood to consist of individually selected symbols of ethnic identity, the use of which is situationally dependent. Open-ended interviews were held with members of ten German immigrant households. Questions were aimed at discovering to what extent these immigrants maintained ethnic boundaries in their homes, and at the interviewees' definition of German ethnic identity. There appeared to be a positive relationship between a greater degree of ethnic boundary maintenance and German citizenship, membership in ethnic churches, and lower educational level. Ethnic boundaries were quite variable, rigidly maintained in some respects, but loose or non-existent in others. Ethnicity was most consistently expressed with regard to foodstyles. There was no consensus among the interviewees regarding the content of their ethnic identity, which suggests that German ethnicity can best be understood as a polythetic class. Some themes of German ethnicity were mentioned quite frequently, such as discipline, thriftiness, a negative attitude towards wasting, homemade decorations, photographs of the family and homeland, German-made products, preparing German meals, and much time spent on food preparation and consumption.

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INTRODUCTION

Few anthropological studies have focussed on ethnicity of German immigrants in Canada. In the existing literature, they have mainly been described as assimilated Canadians who neglect their cultural heritage. This characterization of German immigrants is usually based on observations of German ethnicity in the Canadian public sphere, such as involvement in politics or distinct settlement patterns in Canadian cities. However, it has also been suggested that within the context of Canadian society, German immigrants express their ethnicity mainly in the private sphere of the home.

Being a member of the German ethnic group in Edmonton, I have had contact with German immigrants in Edmonton for over ten years. During this time, I noticed that German-Canadians frequently express their German ethnic identity inside their homes while participating in Canadian culture in the public sphere. Although their ethnicity may not be highly visible within Canadian society, they nevertheless appeared to maintain a feeling of being different from mainstream Canadians and other immigrant groups. It was my impression that this sense of German ethnic identity was conveyed through the language spoken at home, certain food-related customs, some material objects used in the home, and certain values promoted in the home.

For my thesis project, I decided to examine a small number of German immigrant households with regard to their expression of ethnic identity. I hoped to discover to what extent these immigrants expressed ethnicity in their homes, and what attributes make a home environment particularly German in the eyes of the immigrants themselves. Since my fieldwork involved insider anthropology, I also address the value of this research method for my thesis project. Finally, the study provides some insights into ethnicity and ethnic boundary maintenance.

In chapter one, I begin by discussing the traditional functionalist approach to studying culture, in order to place the more recent theoretical discussions of ethnicity within the broader framework of anthropological thought. I then discuss some recent perspectives on ethnicity in order to present my theoretical framework for this study. I understand ethnicity as one of a person's many coexisting social roles. It is expressed through individually selected symbols or customs. Following F. Barth's interpretation, I discuss ethnicity as an expression of boundaries between two or more ethnic groups. Finally, I consider the home as a place for expressing ethnic identity. The home is used as a shelter against other cultural influences, but also as a stage from which ethnicity is communicated to visitors. Emphasized are the symbolic qualities of material objects, food use, language, and values as transmitters of ethnic identity.

Chapter two provides the reader with background information on German immigration to Canada after World War II. This section describes immigrant numbers, Canadian immigration policy, and the reasons for immigration. It then addresses the question of German ethnicity in Canada as it has been discussed in the existing literature. Considering objective criteria, such as citizenship and native language, the membership of the German ethnic community is difficult to define. An interpretation of German ethnicity based on the self-definition of German immigrants has not previously been attempted. German-Canadians have mostly been described as a silent and invisible minority.

In chapter three, I outline methodology. Included are the reasons for doing this study, the finding of research participants, the methods of data gathering and analysis, and the biases which are present in this research project.

A preliminary analysis of my findings is presented in the following chapter four.

In chapter five, I present a further discussion of the data and the main insights which I gained from this study about German-Canadian ethnicity in the home. The discussion will take into account the points raised in chapters one and two concerning theoretical perspectives of ethnicity and research on German-Canadian ethnicity.

CHAPTER ONE

Theoretical Discussion

Theoretical Approaches to Ethnicity.

Traditionally, anthropologists have interpreted culture from a functionalist theoretical framework, studying culture with a strong focus on group homogeneity and cultural continuity. Anthropologists either attempted to describe a whole culture with all its interrelated parts, or they focussed on one aspect of the respective culture while attempting to explain its place and purpose within the whole culture. This type of research largely focussed on small-scale and culturally homogeneous societies in remote areas of the world. Criticizing this focus on cultural homogeneity, Buchignani has argued that "anthropologists of the 1940s and 1950s tended to overbound their research subjects by isolating supposedly autonomous peoples, each with a unique culture, social organization and group identity (Buchignani, unpublished monograph:1; Buchignani, 1982:9).

The study of minority groups in plural societies was the domain of sociologists until the 1960s. When anthropologists studied minority cultural groups in plural societies, some of them still interpreted culture as a homogeneous system based on the continuity of cultural traditions within it. R.

Narroll, for example, defines an ethnic group as "that group of people, whose shared, learned way of life constitutes a 'whole culture' rather than a mere 'subculture'" (Narroll, 1964). Narroll thereby implies that ethnic groups must maintain all aspects of their culture, including political organization, language, economic systems, religion, and social organization. Some anthropologists argued that a major characteristic of plural societies is a balance between each ethnic group's economic, cultural, and political independence, and the simultaneous dependence among the groups. These researchers regarded ethnic communities in plural societies as being fairly autonomous, meeting only in the marketplace (Smith and Benedict, cited in Buchignani, 1982:4).

This interpretation of plural societies largely resulted from the study of countries in which new political structures unified a number of formerly relatively autonomous cultures. In Canada or the United States, most of the existing ethnic groups consist of immigrants, who came to these countries alone or in family groups from various different regions of their homeland and various different social and economic backgrounds, attempting to integrate themselves into an already existing political, economic, and social system. As a result, these ethnic groups do not constitute 'whole cultures'.

Anthropological research on ethnic groups in North America has mainly been confined to those ethnic groups which best suited the theoretical model of a homogeneous culture. As a result, very little research has been conducted among Western European immigrants such as Germans. As is evident from bibliographies of studies concerning German immigrants (Froeschle, 1990; Cardinal and Malicky, 1969), most of the research on German immigrants has focussed on religious minorities, such as Hutterites and Mennonites, who live in easily identifiable groups, leading a lifestyle separate and markedly different from that of other Canadians in many respects. Several studies have focussed on specific regional German groups, such as the Swabians or Baltic Germans, attempting to portray more homogeneous ethnic communities (Kuester, 1979, 1985; Stenger-Frey, 1981; Yedlin, 1983, 1984). Only very few empirical studies do not focus on regional or religious German groups (Kliem, 1970; Poetschke, 1978; Forchner, 1983; Koch-Kraft, 1990). Arguing for a new direction in anthropological research of ethnic groups and ethnic identity, Buchignani criticizes that anthropologists have been "overly concerned with small religious groups or distinctly different cultures such as various South Asian ethnic communities" (Buchignani, unpublished monograph:9).

The sociologist Isajiw notes in his review of definitions of ethnicity that a "descriptive definition of culture is characteristic of anthropological attempts to

define ethnicity" (Isajiw, 1979:10). The definition of ethnic groups purely in terms of objective characteristics was not unique to anthropologists. As Anderson and Frideres mention in their discussion of theoretical perspectives in the study of ethnicity, the 'objectivists' among sociologists also tend to define ethnic groups in terms of their cultural and possibly also physiological attributes, emphasizing a common language, religion, and customs (Anderson and Frideres, 1981:47).

Especially in more recent sociological and anthropological studies of ethnic groups in pluralistic societies, such as the United States and Canada, scholars have become increasingly aware that ethnicity in plural societies cannot be understood solely by listing and analyzing the cultural contents of ethnic groups (Reminick, 1983; Barth, 1969). F. Barth states in his influential book Ethnic Groups and Boundaries that differences between ethnic groups cannot be equated with differences in cultural trait inventories (Barth, 1969:12). Barth's criticism is also directed at those studies of the acculturation and assimilation of ethnic groups, which assume a direct relationship between the changing or disappearance of certain cultural traits and an increasing assimilation into the dominant culture (Barth, 1969). This criticism applies to some of the writings about German immigrants, which reinforce

the image of the 'assimilated German' on the basis of certain objective criteria (Prokop, 1990; Allen, 1964; Artiss, 1983).

Rather than analyzing ethnic groups with a focus on the continuity of the entire traditional culture, social scientists now stress that only certain aspects of the traditional culture are used to express ethnic identity within ethnic groups (Isajiw, 1979; Barth, 1969; Bell, 1975; Nagata, 1981; Reminick, 1983). It follows that even those ethnic groups which, over time, have adopted some aspects of the dominant culture, can have a strong sense of ethnic identity. This is especially true of ethnic groups in North American society, where all members of society participate in the same economic, political, and larger social system. As Isajiw points out, "in North America, ethnic identities persist beyond cultural assimilation", and "relatively few items of the past can become symbols of ethnic identity" (Isajiw, 1979:23). In this context, it is also important to keep in mind that those aspects of an immigrant culture which are not suitable in that group's new cultural and physical environment may lose significance or disappear entirely. This definition of ethnic identity appears to be especially suitable for an understanding of ethnicity among Germans and other Western European immigrants in Canada, since they have often been described as 'assimilated Canadians'.

Following this interpretation of ethnic identity, scholars such as Barth have turned away from a focus on the

cultural contents of ethnic groups, and concentrated on the marking of boundaries between ethnic groups. According to these scholars, ethnic identity involves the conscious choice of individuals. Barth argues that boundaries between ethnic groups are consciously marked by the members of ethnic groups through "overt signals or signs - the diacritical features that people look for and exhibit to show identity, often such features as dress, language, house-form, or general style of life" and "basic value orientations: the standards of morality and excellence by which performance is judged" (Barth, 1969). Since the members of an ethnic group decide which aspects of their culture they use to express their ethnic identity, the cultural content of ethnic identity may change, while the boundaries between groups remain relatively stable (Barth, 1969).

According to Barth, the boundaries between ethnic groups are maintained through social processes of exclusion and inclusion. They are enforced through social sanction, not only by the group's members, but also by members of other ethnic groups. In Barth's view, if there is no agreement between the groups concerning the ethnic content of the situation, there is either no interaction, or interaction without ethnic content (Barth, 1969). With this understanding of ethnicity, Barth assumes that there are relatively clear dichotomies between ethnic groups. The dichotomization between Germans and Canadians may not be as rigid in any

given situation as Barth's model suggests. Nevertheless, Barth's interpretation of ethnicity is useful because it establishes clear parameters for analysis.

Barth notes that ethnic dichotomies may be of varying degrees in different societies. While in some societies ethnic distinctions are the foundations on which the embracing social systems are built, in other societies ethnic categories are only important in certain areas of social life (Barth, 1969). For example, in North American society, ethnicity is largely expressed in the private sphere of the home (Driedger, 1978:36). This statement is especially true for Western European immigrants, such as Germans, who have become relatively invisible in the Canadian public sphere.

Ethnicity is therefore understood as one of many possible social roles. German-Canadians, like all other ethnic groups, do not only interact with each other on the basis of ethnic identity, but also on the basis of profession, religion, gender, or other social statuses. This situational view of ethnicity is also supported by J. Y. Okamura, who notes that the situational perspective avoids the concept of an ethnic group as an objectively defined, shared, uniform cultural inventory or normative patterns of behavior which are constantly adhered to" (Okamura, 1978:456).

Barth approaches situational ethnic identity from the perspective of the individual. In Barth's model, individuals

choose an ethnic identity which best suits their purposes. Barth implicitly assumes a universe in which everyone tries to maximize their advantage and succeeds in doing so. In his article on Pathan identity, Barth maintains that Pathans, who are in various ethnic boundary situations, choose an ethnic identity which best suits them with regard to resource competition. Whenever they do not benefit from maintaining their basic values, they lose their identity as Pathans and become assimilated to the other group (Barth, 1981:103-121).

Other scholars have emphasized political, economic, and social power relations between various social groups in their analysis of ethnicity (Cohen, 1974 ; Despres, 1975; Bell, 1975). Largely in response to the social problems between ethnic groups in North America, these scholars defined ethnic identity mainly in the political sphere: Ethnic groups were interest groups which used some aspects of their culture to gain political power. Bell, for example, defines ethnicity as a "strategic choice by individuals...as a means of gaining power and privilege" (Bell, 1975:171).

A consideration of power relations among the various ethnic groups within a pluralistic society may also be important in the context of studying German immigrants in Canada. The existing power structures within the Canadian state undoubtedly influence the extent to which Germans express their ethnic identity, as well as which symbols they choose to represent their ethnicity. In his essay "The Myth

of Multiculturalism and other Political Fables", Karl Peter describes the persistence of traditional Anglo-Canadian dominance in Canadian institutions and politics. According to Peter, the main objective of the policy of multiculturalism, introduced in 1971, was to "reassert the dominance of the two 'charter groups' and to justify and legitimize this dominance through appropriate symbols, assumptions, and ideas" (Peter, 1981:60). Peter further argues that the policy recognizes ethnic contributions to Canada's development and "ethnic groups as sources of individual identity and as cultural groups preserving quaint remnants of folklore and customs" (Peter, 1981:65). While this represents a rather negative view of Canadian ethnicity, it nevertheless explains how the already existing power structures in Canada have restricted the expression of ethnicity largely to the private sphere of the home and family, and the public expressions of ethnic identity to stereotypical symbols such as certain types of food, folk music, and dress, used for special occasions.

While Barth focuses on the interaction between ethnic groups which is based on a relatively small number of easily recognizable symbols, Peterson Royce interprets ethnicity in terms of 'double boundaries', a "boundary maintained from within, and the boundary imposed from outside, which results from the process of interaction with others" (Peterson Royce, 1982:29-33). It becomes clear that ethnic identity expression which is performed and interpreted within a person's own

ethnic group may be more complex and different from those symbols of ethnic identity which are expressed to members of other ethnic groups across ethnic boundaries. For example, ethnic groups which are unified under one label by non-members may have substantial variation and social stratification within their own group. In addition, individual members of the same ethnic group may choose to express their ethnic identity in different ways (Keyes, 1981:10).

The home as a place for expressing ethnic identity.

The concept of the home as a place for identity expression has rarely been discussed by social scientists, and particularly seldom by anthropologists. From a psychological point of view, Cooper concentrates on the home as a place for the expression of personal identities:

> As we become accustomed to, and lay claim to, this little niche in the world, we project something of ourselves onto its physical fabric. The furniture we install, the way we arrange it, the pictures we hang, the plants we buy and tend, all the expressions of our images of ourselves, all are messages about ourselves that we want to convey back to ourselves, and to the few intimates that we invite to this, our house.
>
> (Cooper, 1976:437)

Ethnic identity can be understood as that aspect of personal identity which is specifically related to a person's cultural

affiliation. It is therefore reasonable to assume that our homes also convey our sense of belonging to a certain ethnic group.

Empirical studies show that home interiors can be linked with the inhabitants' social status and their social and cultural environment. In her study of dwellings in a Croatian village, Muraj (1988) argues, that certain types of architecture and interior decoration correspond to specific periods in the village's socio-cultural history. Muraj shows how traditional aspects of home decoration, such as the 'holy corner' in the kitchen, where pictures of saints were traditionally placed, are transformed to reflect social and cultural changes over time (Muraj, 1988). This study also makes clear that certain areas in the home, such as the 'holy corner', may have special significance in representing social identities.

Scharfe, Binder, and Traenkle cooperated in a German study which attempted to link popular wall decorations in people's homes with the inhabitants' social status (Scharfe, 1970; Binder, 1970; Traenkle, 1970). In this study, special emphasis is given to differences between the expressive qualities of the various rooms in the house. The living room, for example, is described as a sphere which is open to the public, and in which people attempt to represent their social status to persons outside of their household through status symbols such as original paintings. Other areas of the home,

such as the bedrooms, are private areas, in which personal identities are represented in the form of family photographs and religious symbols.

The double function of the home as a display case of the inhabitants' social status on the one hand, and as a private shelter against the outside world on the other hand, has also been noted in other studies (Loefgren, 1983; Roberts, 1988; Denton, 1970). In the context of ethnic identity, the concept of the home as a "shelter" and as a "display case" possibly points to the double function of ethnic boundaries. Ethnic boundaries in the home are marked in order to create a feeling of belonging for the members of the ethnic group, while at the same time they serve to express differences between the inhabitants' and other ethnic groups.

I have discussed the home as a space for the expression of identity in terms of the material things displayed inside it. The role which material objects play in our construction and expression of social identities is particularly emphasized in studies of material culture and consumption which argue from a symbolic theoretical perspective. Douglas and Isherwood, for example, argued that all goods carry social meaning when they are studied in their social context (Douglas & Isherwood, 1979). Studying the social context within which things are displayed and used appears to be crucial, since most goods do not possess one specific inherent meaning.

In keeping with this interpretation of material culture, Gell has argued that goods are incorporated into the consumers' definition of their social and individual identities (Gell, 1986). As tangible expressions of our identities, material objects have the function of providing their owners with a certain degree of stability and security. As Csikszentmihaly writes, "people can retrieve their sameness, their identity, by being related to the same chair, table, etc ...." (Csikszentmihaly, 1981:16). Being surrounded by other ethnic groups and unfamiliar customs, immigrants may use the things in their homes to hold on to their cultural identity. Creating a sense of cultural continuity through selected material objects, which have been transferred from their original context in the home country to their new environment, may be one important aspect of immigrants' expression of ethnic identity in their homes.

As Appadurai and Kopytoff emphasize, things which are taken out of their original cultural context to symbolize ethnic identity in the new environment undergo changes in meaning (Appadurai, 1986; Kopytoff, 1986). For example, an insignificant utilitarian object can take on symbolic significance when it is used in the context of living in a new and foreign cultural environment. Since only certain material objects are chosen to represent ethnic identity in the home, the symbolic use of goods does not only involve

cultural continuity, but also the creation of a new self-definition of an ethnic group (McCracken, 1990).

The display of material objects in the home appears to be an important indicator of the inhabitants' sense of ethnic identity. However, ethnicity is also expressed in several other ways within the boundaries of the home, especially with regards to language, values, and foodstyles. The use of the native language inside immigrants' homes has often been used by scholars and government officials as a criterion for determining the immigrants' maintenance of ethnic identity. It has been recognized that language use in the home must be examined with regard to specific speech situations, thereby accounting for differences in language use between parents, and between parents and their Canadian-born children (Koch-Kraft, 1990).

The importance of value orientations as markers of ethnic identity within immigrants' homes has been stressed especially in studies dealing with the upbringing of immigrant children, such as Forchner's case studies of twelve German immigrant families' children. Forchner shows that some of these children had considerable problems adjusting to Canadian society, because their upbringing was very different from that of other Canadians in terms of values and general lifestyle (Forchner, 1983).

Foodstyles include all aspects of food-related activity, from acquisition to preparation, consumption, and disposal.

Each of these can play a role in the performance of ethnic identity and define social meaning. Mary Douglas, the anthropologist who has had the most impact on the study of foodstyles in anthropology, emphasizes the symbolic aspect of food. With regard to the connection between foodstyles and ethnic identity, Douglas maintains that food use symbolically reinforces ethnic boundaries (Douglas, 1971; Douglas, 1984).

Food use is a particularly strong mechanism of exclusion and inclusion within ethnic groups. Stereotypes about ethnic groups often relate to particular eating habits, and members of ethnic groups are sometimes called by names which relate to their food use. Germans, for example, are sometimes referred to as 'Krauts' in North America, and Turkish people in Germany are often called 'Knoblauchfresser' ('garlic eaters'). During interethnic conflicts, 'strange food' often means 'strange people' (Kalcik, 1984). At the same time, the sharing of certain foodstyles creates a strong sense of belonging among the members of an ethnic group. Moore writes, for example, that Malokan-Americans express their belonging to the Malokan Brotherhood most strongly through the people's adherence to a shared code of conduct during common meals (Moore, 1984).

Within most North American ethnic groups, traditional foodstyles have changed considerably. Not all aspects of traditional foodstyles are maintained, and many outside influences are visible in the foodstyles of ethnic North

Americans. As with material objects, only certain customs and selected food items and dishes become symbols of ethnic identity. Douglas notes that ethnic boundaries are retained and reinforced most strongly with regard to food preparation, classification, and presentation, while ethnic boundaries are more easily crossed with respect to individual food items.

Returning to the concept of the home as a place for marking ethnic boundaries, one can assume that the use of material objects, language, food, and general moral guidelines in the home work together in order to strengthen or weaken ethnic boundaries.

CHAPTER TWO

German Immigrants in Canada after World War II

German Immigration to Canada.

German immigration to Canada started not long after the British and French colonists settled Eastern Canada. The first documentation of German immigrants to Canada dates to the year 1664 in what is now the province of Quebec (Debor, 1965:2). Since that time, Germans have settled in Canada in such large numbers that German-Canadians make up Canada's third-largest ethnic group (Weissenborn, 1978:22).

This study is concerned with Germans who arrived in Canada after the Second World War. Although much is written on the earlier years of German immigration to Canada, German immigration since the end of World War II has been a neglected topic among scholars (Bassler, 1987:168). It has, for example, been stated that in the years 1945-1950 there simply were no new German immigrants because "no government could have opened its doors to large numbers of immigrants from a country some of whose citizens had committted such heinous crimes" (quoted in Basseler, 1987:168).

However, in actuality, many German immigrants were already welcomed in Canada during the 1940s. So-called 'Orders- in-Council' prohibited the immigration of 'enemy

aliens', but when Canada experienced an extreme shortage of laborers in 1947, the Canadian government issued a decree which allowed so-called 'displaced persons' of German origin to immigrate. Already in the spring of 1947, almost 100,000 German immigrants had arrived in Canada with the help of the International Refugee Organization and various church organizations (Koch-Kraft, 1990:39). At this time, West Germany was home to nearly eight million refugees of German ethnic origin, who were expelled from the former German regions incorporated into Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and the Soviet zone of Germany after the war (McLaughlin, 1985:16). Most of the Germans immigrating to Canada before 1950 were Germans from these former German regions.

There was, however, a smaller number of non-refugee German immigrants arriving in Canada at a time when Germans were officially still considered 'enemy aliens', and excluded from immigration. In November 1946, the Canadian Committee of the Privy Council approved a decree which proposed "...to permit the entry into Canada on the recommendation of the President of the National Research Council and the Director General of Defense Research, of selected German Scientists and Technicians required for industrial and educational purposes" (quoted in Koch-Kraft, 1990:41). Evidently, all correspondence concerning the contacting and hiring of these

scientists was treated as 'Top Secret' by Canadian officials (Koch-Kraft, 1990:41).

From the year 1950, Germans were no longer classified as 'enemy aliens', and German applicants for immigration were treated the same as applicants from other nations (Koch-Kraft, 1990:43). In fact, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration declared neither service in the German army, nor membership in the Nazi Party itself to be a cause for rejection (Basseler, 1987:176). The relaxation of the immigration laws, as well as Canada's active recruitment of new immigrants from several European countries, resulted in the arrival of a large number of German immigrants during the 1950s. More than five hundred thousand Germans came to Canada during this time, among them as many resettlers from the former East German regions as young West Germans (Panthel, 1991:11).

This extensive immigration of Germans to Canada made up only a small part of the overall emigration from European countries at that time. Panthel cites an article, written in 1949 in Germany, which states that forty-two percent of all young Germans, and fifty-eight percent of the young English people wished to emigrate. According to that article, the situation was the same in other European countries (quoted in Panthel, 1991:27).

As Koch-Kraft discovered in her study of German immigrants in Edmonton, the reasons for emigration among the

new German immigrants in Canada after World War Two were quite varied (Koch-Kraft, 1990:111). However, several factors seem to have played a particularly important role in the immigrants' decision to leave Germany for Canada. Germany was only slowly starting to rebuild itself economically, and the standard of living was very low after the war. Panthel writes that "there was a decided restlessness and impatience among the young Germans at the time, who did not consider their progress fast enough" (Panthel, 1991:40).

Aside from the problem of economic security, many Germans were also concerned about the political stability of their country, fearing that the Red Army would advance further into West German territory (Panthel, 1991:40). Another consideration for emigration was the rearmament of Germany, and the compulsory military service. Many of the young Germans who had experienced the war as children and teenagers did not want to be part of any militaristic efforts. Other common motives for emigration included a desire for adventure, family reunions, and a perceived lack of space in Germany (Panthel, 1991:11; Koch-Kraft, 1990:111). In addition, many of the refugees from the former eastern German regions did not feel quite at home in the new West Germany.

This desire of many young German people to leave their home country was met by considerable efforts by Canadian officials to recruit immigrants who were economically useful

for Canada, mainly tradespeople and professionals. In their information leaflets and advertisements, the Canadian Immigration Branch presented Canada as a country of "unlimited possibilities" (Panthel, 1991:41), and "a heaven on earth" (Hoyningen-Huene, 1985:25). Panthel recalls that he and other young Germans were especially impressed by these information leaflets, because "they were printed in gaudy colours - in sharp contrast to the colourless Germany of the time with its war-scars all around" (Panthel, 1991:41). From the little knowledge which the immigrants had of Canada, either through official advertisement or through descriptions by relatives already living in Canada, the New World appeared to offer everything which Germans in the early Fifties were lacking. To the German immigrants, Canada promised fast economic growth and economic security, political freedom and stability without the compulsory military service, and a vast, open space with lots of untouched wilderness. The economic advantages of living in Canada appear to have been particularly important, as Panthel writes: "Our ardor for the new country probably derived principally from the high standard of living which we encountered in Canada, the many material things we all of a sudden were able to enjoy" (Panthel, 1991:42).

The Germans as an Ethnic Group in Canada.

Most studies of German immigrants in Canada have concentrated on objective criteria of ethnic group membership and ethnicity among German-Canadians. These researchers of German immigrants commonly argue that German-Canadians have such varying economic, cultural, geographical, and religious backgrounds, that they cannot easily be defined as one ethnic group in terms of these objective criteria. Richter, for example, finds it "impossible to define the German-Canadian ethnic group with precision" (Richter, 1983:46). Artiss, in his article 'Who Are The German-Canadians - One Ethnic Group Or Several?', comes to the conclusion that only a few 'typically German' artifacts, such as certain handcrafted furniture or decorative objects, can define the German ethnic group in Canada (Artiss, 1983).

These scholars also cannot look to the official Canadian census records for a precise definition of a relatively homogeneous German ethnic group. Until 1981, the Canadian government attempted to define ethnic groups according to place of birth, citizenship, ethnic origin, or mother tongue of individual people or their male ancestors (Koch-Kraft, 1990:16). These censuses did not represent a homogeneous ethnic community. Many German-speaking people immigrated from the former Soviet Union or other Eastern European nations. Others were born within the territory of the German Reich,

but became citizens of other nations after 1945. An emphasis on the mother tongue also resulted in difficulties of ethnic definition, since German-speaking persons may be from Austria or Switzerland. Richter mentions, for example, that in the pre-1953 censuses, Austrians were inadvertently classified as Germans (Richter, 1983:43).

In 1981, the Canadian government introduced a new and more subjective definition of ethnicity which "reflects respondent's perception of their ethnic background and the cultural group with which they most closely identify" (quoted in Koch-Kraft, 1990:16). Such a subjective definition of German-Canadians necessarily characterized the German-Canadian ethnic group as heterogeneous, with persons of various different cultural and geographical backgrounds identifying themselves as Germans. It is also important to note that some people who have a sense of belonging to the German ethnic group may not identify themselves as Germans because of the stigma attached to being German after the two World Wars.

The disunity among German-Canadians with regard to objective criteria of ethnic group membership has resulted in separate studies of the various regional German groups and religious sub-groups. Koch-Kraft mentions that the English literature on German immigrants simplifies the problem of ethnic group definition by dividing the German community into 'Reichsdeutsche' (those Germans who were born within the

territory of the present Germany), and 'Volksdeutsche' (those Germans who were born in any of the former Eastern German territories or in the German colonies in Russia and the Ukraine). Koch-Kraft uses this distinction between 'Reichsdeutsche' and 'Volksdeutsche' in her own analysis of German immigrant adaptation in Edmonton (Koch-Kraft, 1990). It is, however, obvious that 'Volksdeutsche' and 'Reichsdeutsche,' respectively, do not form two homogenious groups and that generalizations about them are therefore difficult.

Aside from the question of German ethnic group membership, scholars have also researched and commented on cultural maintenance and the expression of ethnicity among German-Canadians. In discussing ethnicity, researchers have focussed purely on objective criteria, such as the involvement of German-Canadians in politics and the economic sphere, the preservation of their native language, and settlement and marriage patterns (Koch-Kraft, 1990; Prokop, 1990; Allen, 1964; Basseler, 1990; Artiss, 1983; Pletsch & Vestweber, 1983; Panthel, 1991).

In most of these studies, conclusions about German ethnicity are mainly based on quantitative data . An exception is Panthel's book, which is based on his personal experience in the German-Canadian community (Panthel, 1990). German-Canadians are widely characterized as being "silent" (Basseler, 1990), the "untroublesome Canadians" (Allen,

1964:19-21), and the "best integrated, least vocal, least politically active ethnic group" (Artiss, 1983:73; McLaughlin, 1985:20). Prokop agrees that "the 'Germans' have become an invisible minority", and that "they take pains to show that they have been acculturated into the mainstream 'Canadian way of life'" (Prokop, 1990:14).

This alleged 'silence' has been partially attributed to the rapid loss of the native language among German immigrants (Prokop, 1990). Census statistics from the year 1971 show that 62% of German-Canadians do not regularly speak their native language inside their homes. Compared to other immigrant groups, this number is very high, and only exceeded by the Dutch and Scandinavian immigrant groups (Pletsch & Vestweber, 1983:43). The rapid loss of the German language among German immigrants is especially remarkable considering the large number of German immigrants in Canada.

Germans are not politically active as an ethnic group, which is viewed as contributing to their perceived 'silence' in the public realm of Canadian society. Panthel argues that the low profile of Germans in politics makes them into a "plaything of voters who represent other interests and other nationalities (Panthel, 1991:26). Regarding the representation of German-Canadians in Canadian governments, I was unable to find any statistical data. I assume, however, that other ethnic groups, especially visible minorities, are even more underrepresented.

There may be a lack of German participation in voting. A considerable number of German immigrants cannot vote in Canada, because they retained their German citizenship while living as landed immigrants in Canada (Koch-Kraft, 1990:151). The large number of landed immigrants among German Canadians as compared to other ethnic groups may therefore cause an underrepresentation of Germans in the voting process. The tendency to keep German citizenship is especially widespread among immigrants from the present German territory, since they came for economic rather than political reasons (Koch-Kraft, 1990:153).

Several other reasons have been stated for the low participation of German immigrants in politics. Panthel draws a kind of psychological profile of Germans with regard to their participation in politics. According to him, Germans lack public courage, and have a "tendency to let themselves be governed". Resulting from their historical experience with autocratic political systems, Panthel comments that Germans display the traits of obedience and the "will to serve" (Panthel, 1991:65).

Rather than attribute political apathy to some inherent psychological predisposition, Prokop argues that most German immigrants readily accepted the Canadian political system because they had just fled the arbitrary and autocratic political systems of Europe (Prokop, 1991:59). These immigrants were grateful that Canada accepted them and

offered them a new peaceful home. Official Canadian immigration policy made it clear that immigration was a privilege rather than a right, and the new German-Canadians shared this view (Koch-Kraft, 1990:247). This attitude of gratefulness and few demands towards Canada is also evident in autobiographical writings of first generation German-Canadians (Frank, 1977; Priebe, 1989).

German Canadians were also careful to voice their political opinions in public because of their connection with the Nazi regime. McLaughlin documents the long history of German political silence in Canada as a result of international conflicts, during which the Germans were the enemies of Britain and Canada. She mentions that after the First World War, Germans avoided all talk of politics in their clubs and were guarded in their use of German in the home (McLaughlin, 1985:14).

A brief discussion of stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination against German immigrants is in order here, since prejudices and common stereotypes of immigrants can influence the extent and nature of the immigrants' expression of ethnicity. There is evidence to believe that Germans still perceive some discrimination against them on account of the Hitler regime. While in a recent study which compared discrimination against different ethnic groups, Germans claimed to experience virtually no discrimination at the workplace, the percentage of German-Canadians perceiving

discrimination outside of the workplace was higher than that of most other ethnic groups (Breton, 1983:432). Similarly, Koch-Kraft claims that outside the workplace, other Canadians still keep Germans at a distance because of the atrocities committed during the Nazi times (Koch-Kraft, 1990:244). The public image of Germans appears to be mainly influenced by Germany's militaristic history and the folk traditions of Southern Germany. For example, in 1981, university students in Quebec, who were asked to draw a typical German, portrayed Germans wearing uniforms or traditional Bavarian folk dresses (Pletsch & Vestweber, 1983:56). Several of my interviewees for this study claimed that the Canadian media are biased in their treatment of Germany, focusing on neo-fascist activities in Germany today, as well as on the Hitler era. As could be expected, the interviewees generally avoided any discussion of the Nazi times, except for one immigrant who had been imprisoned by the Nazis, and another informant who did not want his opinions publicized.

The missing public reaction of German immigrants in Canada to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent reunification of Germany in the fall of 1990 could be interpreted as an example of the German-Canadian political 'silence'. Although most German immigrants were deeply moved by the 'lifting of the Iron Curtain', they did not express their enthusiasm to the Canadian public. In contrast, when

the Ukraine gained its status as an independent nation, Ukrainians were visibly celebrating all over Canada.

The alleged assimilation and resulting 'invisibility' of German-Canadians in the Canadian public appears to be especially pronounced in the economic sphere. According to Koch-Kraft, the average annual income of German immigrants is higher than that of any other ethnic group in Canada, including the British and French groups. The high average income stands in contrast to the comparatively lower level of education and professional training among German immigrants (Koch-Kraft, 1990:132).

The focus on economic achievement among German immigrants in Canada obviously relates to the immigrants' motivation for coming here, since most Germans hoped for a better economic future and were prepared to work hard for this goal. German-Canadians thereby reinforced the stereotype of Germans as "hard-working, goal-oriented, orderly, saving, obedient, and modest" (Bodnar, 1985:69; Schilling, 1978:257). This image of the hard-working German caused some immigration officials to prefer German immigrants over applicants from other nations (Koch-Kraft, 1990:81). In the economic sphere, the interests and expectations of the Canadian society and the German settlers were similar. For the German ethnic group at least, if not for other ethnic groups, economic success became the main criteria for being a 'good Canadian'.

The German immigrants' focus on economic achievement has been connected with their neglect of their cultural tradition and the fragmented nature of the German ethnic group. Von Cardinal writes that the Germans have forgotten their cultural heritage, and have "transformed themselves into the most success-oriented realists and 'go-getters'" (Von Cardinal, 1973:58). Their concern with individual economic success can act as a divisive force among them. German immigrants tend to compete, rather than cooperate, a situation Panthel refers to as "competitive Canadianization" (Panthel, 1991:61). Some of my interviewees commented on this competitive atmosphere among German immigrants, maintaining that Germans are not helpful towards one another and do not stick together.

As more evidence for the low public profile of German immigrants in Canada, scholars mention their dispersed settlement pattern. According to several studies, Germans are the most dispersed ethnic group in Canada. In cities especially, they appear to choose their residences in terms of their economic status rather than their ethnic heritage. The settlement pattern of German immigrants has been described as being similar to the British (Schmidt, 1983:118). Koch-Kraft cites Danziger, who could not include samples of German immigrant children in his study of Toronto's immigrant children because he could not find them: "...it proved much more difficult to find a group of German

immigrant children than a group of Italians. This was due to the striking difference in settlement patterns of German and Italian immigrants. The former are not to be found in high concentration in any identifiable area of residence" (Koch-Kraft, 1990:100). As Koch-Kraft cautions, however, dispersed settlement patterns do not necessarily preclude a homogeneous and relatively closed community, given modern means of transportation and communication (Koch-Kraft, 1990:193).

The stress in the literature on German-Canadians as a 'silent' group may appear unsubstantiated, considering the relatively large number of German-Canadian ethnic organizations. The German-Canadian Association counts 61 member organizations, and there are eleven German churches in Edmonton alone, as well as two German newspapers. In Edmonton, there are over seventy services and businesses which cater to German-Canadian clientele. In that regard, the 'German presence' in Edmonton is so strong that Germans can get all their business done in German. Accordingly, some scholars direct their negative prognosis towards the near future rather than the present situation of German immigrants. Thus, Prokop notes that German ethnic events are at present reasonably well-attended, while less than one percent of the second and third generation German-Canadians are involved in cultural activities (Prokop, 1991:13).

However, other writers disagree with this evaluation of German cultural maintenance. Priebe points out that in

relation to the number of German immigrants, the number of German businesses and publications is fairly small. In addition, the number of organizations may be deceiving, since many of them are quite specialized, such as card-playing clubs, and therefore have relatively few members (Priebe, 1989:174). Moreover, there does not appear to be much cooperation between the various clubs, which would give them a stronger public voice. Evidence for a distant or at times even unpleasant relationship between the various clubs comes from the people I spoke to, as well as from the literature (Panthel, 1991:65). Apparently, churches and clubs have difficulties in keeping their membership (Koch-Kraft, 1990:205; Prokop, 1991:13).

German public expressions of ethnicity exploit and reinforce the common stereotype of Germans in Canada. This stereotype commonly centers around folk music, dances, dress, as well as food and drink from Southern Germany. As already discussed in the previous chapter, these are also aspects of culture which are approved and supported as expressions of ethnic identity by the Canadian policy of multiculturalism. For example, the government-funded Alberta Heritage Days features folk dancing, traditional costumes, traditional folk music, and ethnic cuisine. The German pavilion sells Sauerkraut and Bratwurst, and presents crafts and dances mainly from Southern Germany. Another example of the use of stereotypes in the representation of the German ethnic group

was the exhibition "Man and his World" in Montreal, where Germany was represented with two Bavarian folk dance groups and a collection of beer mugs. Germans use the public stereotype to raise money and to draw people to their stores and cultural activities. The advertisements for their clubs are filled with stereotypical images, such as beer mugs and Lederhosen (Pletsch & Vestweber, 1983:55).

There seemed to be a consensus among the German people I interviewed that the German ethnic group has a lower public profile than some of the other ethnic groups. This lower public profile was partially attributed to the German group's weak initiative, but also to the Canadian public's preference for other ethnic communities, and to the dominant presence of other ethnic groups. Referring to the 'invisibility' of the German immigrants, one interviewee said that "the English and Ukrainians trample everything else down here", and another interviewee remarked somewhat disappointedly that Canadians will invite people to go out for Chinese or Ukrainian food, but they never say 'let's go out for German food'".

The portrayal of the German-Canadians as being silent and assimilated mainstream Canadians who have neglected their cultural roots is considered to be too one-sided or even incorrect by some scholars (Koch-Kraft, 1990; Schmidt, 1983). Schmidt comments in his article "The German-Canadians and their Umbilical Cord" on the strong attachment to German culture of German immigrants who came to Canada in the 1950s:

"Although they have refrained from obvious external protestations of their origin, they nevertheless feel a very strong attachment to everything German. Naturally, the Volkswagen became the most obvious symbol of attachment with the old country. But there are many more commodities such as furniture and kitchen gadgets bearing the 'Made in Germany' label". Schmidt makes the point that the pride and almost blind confidence in everything "Made in Germany" marks the preservation and promotion of German culture in Canada. The economic ties between German producers and German-Canadian consumers are estimated to be so substantial that their present decline may have noticable implications for the German economy (Schmidt, 1983:74). Schmidt bases his conclusions on his own experience as a member of the post-World War II German immigrant community.

Koch-Kraft, in her study of German immigrant adaptation in Edmonton, also comes to the conclusion that the image of the 'assimilated German' is only partially correct. Koch-Kraft argues that the German ethnic group is characterized by a "striking dualism" in terms of their acceptance of Canadian culture. While German immigrants fulfill the role of the exemplary Canadian in the public sphere, their private sphere is distinctly German (Koch-Kraft, 1990:247). This tendency to restrict ethnicity to the private sphere is probably more or less pronounced in all Canadian ethnic groups, and results from a political and economic system which does not

officially include ethnic differences. In this sense, the two official Canadian charter groups may not be classifiable as ethnic groups.

Koch-Kraft determines the German character of the immigrants' private sphere by looking at marriage patterns, the ethnic make-up of the immigrants' social circle, the celebration of major festivals in the home, the home language, and the self-identification of her research subjects. For example, Koch-Kraft reports an endogamy rate of 77.3 percent among her Edmonton sample (Koch-Kraft,1990:194). This figure appears to be relatively representative, since another researcher has calculated an endogamy rate of 81 percent for German immigrants in Ontario (Hecht, 1985:217). Similarly, close friendships are formed mainly within the German ethnic group. According to Koch-Kraft's study, only 4.5 percent of the participants had friendships mainly outside of the German ethnic community, and over half had exclusively German social contacts (Koch-Kraft, 1990:200).

Although Koch-Kraft mentions that she conducted several in-depth interviews with German immigrants to substantiate her findings, her study was based on a questionnaire which was filled out by around three hundred German immigrants in Edmonton. The participants could choose their answers from a limited number of possible responses. As an example, participants were asked if they celebrated the major annual

festivals (such as Christmas, birthdays, carnival) according to Canadian or German customs (Koch-Kraft, 1990:318).

However, the reader of Koch-Kraft's study does not gain much insight into the more subjective side of ethnic expression in the private sphere. Koch-Kraft does not address the question of ethnic self-definition, or what the German immigrants perceive as the distinctive elements of their ethnic identity. With my own study among German immigrants in Edmonton, I have attempted to address this question of ethnic self-definition.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Selecting a Research Topic.

The scarcity of qualitative anthropological research on German immigrants' ethnicity (other than isolated communities such as the Mennonites or Hutterites) was one consideration for choosing this topic. Conclusions about German immigrants' expression of ethnicity have mostly been based on studies using a quantitative methodology with little consideration for individual differences in the expression of ethnicity. These studies also do not consider that the expression of ethnicity involves the immigrants' own interpretation of what is German.

Previous research on German ethnicity has neglected the use of material objects in the home as markers of ethnic identity. Similarly, the use of foodstyles for expressing ethnic identity has only been considered superficially. Ideological aspects of ethnicity, such as values or moral standards, have hardly been mentioned. However, from my personal experience among German immigrants in Edmonton, I had the impression that foodstyles, material objects, language, and values were important aspects of making the home a 'German place'.

My decision to study German immigrants was also partly due to my desire to conduct "insider anthropology". I was born in Germany and lived there until I was sixteen, when I came to Canada for one year. I returned to Germany for three years. Since 1985, I have mostly lived in Canada, returning twice to Germany for the duration of one year in 1987/88 and 1990/91. Although my official status is that of a foreign student rather than that of an immigrant, I think that my experience here is, to some extent, very similar to an immigrant experience. One of the most important advantages of insider anthropology is the ability to converse with the informants in their native language (Messerschmidt, 1981:18). Most of my informants were more fluent in German, and preferred to conduct the interview in German.

Throughout the study, I made use of my own experiences as a German living in Canada, and of my personal knowledge of German culture for the interpretation of my data. Proponents of insider anthropology have argued that insider anthropologists can have greater insight into their research topics than anthropologists working in foreign environments (Henigh, 1881:121-132).

Messerschmidt cautions, however, that insider anthropologists do not necessarily share their interviewees' cultural experiences, since all cultures are complex systems, characterized by internal variation (Messerschmidt, 1981:25). Similarly, my cultural experiences are different from those

of my interviewees. I come from a different region in Germany than most of my interviewees. More importantly in the context of this study, I come from a different time in Germany than my informants, who mostly emigrated in the 1950s and 1960s, before I was born. German culture and lifestyles have changed especially much during the decades after the Second World War. In the early 1950s, when most of my interviewees emigrated, Germany was just starting to recover from the material and economic destruction of the Second World War. It was only beginning to establish itself as a democratic country. Relatively few non-Germans were living in Germany at this time. By contrast, the Germany I grew up in had become a wealthy country. North American cultural influences had become an integral part of German society. Moreover, already in the 1960s, numerous other ethnic groups lived in Germany, exposing Germans to different lifestyles and customs.

I wanted to limit my study to first-generation German immigrants who came to Canada relatively soon after the Second World War, in the 1950s and 1960s. This temporal framework of the study established a narrower focus, which I felt was necessary for the limited time available for the research.

Another consideration was the region of origin of the immigrants selected for my study. As I already discussed in chapter 2, German immigrants have often been divided into so-called 'Volksdeutsche' and 'Reichsdeutsche', with the

assumption that the differences between these two groups are greater than the differences between other regional German groups. From the outset of my study, I directed my search for interviewees at Germans from all regions. I suspected that it might be difficult to find enough interviewees, and therefore did not want to limit the scope of my study too much.

Contacting Informants.

The search for interviewees began in May of 1992 with the distribution of about a hundred typewritten and photo-copied letters, stating my research interests in the broadest terms, as well as introducing myself as a German-born student of anthropology in Canada. The letters, written in German, were distributed in two of the Southside German delicatessen stores. The letters were placed by the cashier in good visibility of the customers. The flyers remained there for a period of about three or four weeks, at which time there were still a good number of them left over. This attempt proved not to be very successful, since only one person, Herr Fleck (the informants' names are pseudonymes), contacted me for participation in the study. In the meantime, I had already secured the participation of Frau Gieber, at whose home I had stayed for one year in 1981/82, and with whom I have retained a close relationship until now. She also suggested her friend

and neighbour, Frau Hanse, whom I knew from the year I lived at the Giebers' house. Through Frau Gieber's son's fiancee, I made contact with the Dietrich family.

My next step was to distribute leaflets, which stated my research interests and request for further informants in the Giebers' German Lutheran church. The minister announced the distribution of the leaflets after the service, and leaflets were given to those who showed interest after the service. They were distributed by Frau Gieber's son's fiancee to the prospective interviewees. She later told me that she tried to give leaflets to those people who she thought were suitable for my study. She considered those people to be suitable for my study who have a great interest in preserving their German heritage. This sampling bias may have been more influential to the study, if I had received many interviewees through this campaign. However, only Herr Bremer contacted me for participation in my study. I contacted the Cassels and Herr Arndt through a mutual friend. The Cassels then suggested that I talk to her friend, Frau Jodel, and her cousin, Frau Klink.

Finally, I decided to distribute another set of leaflets advertising my study in the German courses at the University of Alberta. I was hoping to reach children of German immigrants, who could then ask their parents to participate. Leaflets were distributed in 300 and 400 level classes, because more children of German immigrants attended these

classes. I was contacted by Herr Eisen, and another woman, whom I visited once, but decided not to use for my study because she did not have anything to say on the subject.

Two other people were contacted who were not used as informants for the research project. One individual, a personal friend and a professional social scientist, proved to be more interested in the methodology of my study than in the topic of the research project. The other person, a woman introduced to me by a mutual friend, was not included because we merely chatted about all sorts of things and I was unable to get her to concentrate on my research topic.

Considering the extensive search for interviewees, the response from the German immigrant community was very limited. This lack of response could be related to a number of factors, such as a general lack of interest among German immigrants in their cultural heritage, or an unwillingness to afford the time for the interviews. In previous studies of German immigrants in Edmonton, researchers also noted that they had difficulties to find a sufficient number of interviewees for their project (Deutschlaender, 1987; Forchner, 1983; Koch-Kraft, 1990).

The Interviewees.

Members of ten German immigrant households were willing to participate in my study.

The Cassels, Dietrichs, and Klinks are married couples whose children have already left home. The Eisens are a married couple who still live with their children. In these four cases, I conducted group interviews with all members of the household. Frau Gieber lives alone, after her husband died recently and her youngest children left home about one year ago. Frau Jodel and Herr Bremer are widowed and their children have left home. Frau Hanse lives with her husband and two of her children. She is the only member of of her household whom I interviewed. Herr Arndt lives alone with his wife, after his children left home. I did not interview Frau Arndt. Herr Fleck lives with his Canadian wife. He is the only interviewee whose spouse is not also a German immigrant. Herr Fleck's wife was present during the interviews, but she only rarely participated.

Most of the interviewees came to Canada in the 1950s. Only the Dietrichs, Klinks, and Eisens immigrated in the 1960s. The motivation for immigrating to Canada were mainly economic considerations for the Hanses, Dietrichs, Cassels, Jodels, and the Bremers. Economic considerations were mixed with a desire for adventure in the Eisens', Herr Arndt's, and the Klinks' decision to emigrate. The Giebers left because of

the material destruction in Germany after the Second World War, and because of economic considerations. Herr Fleck only mentioned adventure as his motivation to emigrate to Canada. Herr Bremer also mentioned the fear of lasting political instability in Germany.

I did not ask the interviewees any questions regarding their economic standing, because it seemed to be a sensitive topic with my informants. One couple had participated in Koch-Kraft's study, and had found her questions about financial matters too personal. They further commented that many of the participants in this study had felt the same way about these enquiries. All of my informants appeared to be relatively or very well off economically. All interviewees owned the houses or apartments they lived in, and their homes are located in middle or upper middle class neighbourhoods in Edmonton. All interviewees described themselves as extremely satisfied with their economic achievements in Canada. For those interviewees who were dissatisfied with other aspects of Canadian society, their economic success here was the major incentive for staying in Canada and an important source of their happiness and sense of satisfaction.

The educational level and occupation does vary widely among the immigrants interviewed for this study. Of the interviewed women, only two worked outside of their homes. Frau Jodel worked as a cook, and Frau Eisen worked in a German delicatessen store. None of the seven interviewed

women had any secondary education. Herr Arndt's, Herr Fleck's, and Herr Bremer's wives were not interviewed, but they also did not work outside of the home. Among the seven men interviewed, occupations varied widely. Herr Dietrich is a master carpenter, Herr Cassel a retired postal worker, Herr Bremer owns a German store, Herr Klink had been a farmer but is now retraining to become a nurse, Herr Eisen is a master electrician, Herr Fleck a retired railway worker, and Herr Arndt a mechanical engineer working for a large company. Frau Jodel's deceased husband was an engineer, Frau Gieber's deceased husband a Lutheran minister, and Frau Hanse's husband is an engineer.

The sample was slightly biased towards active members of various churches. The Dietrichs, Giebers, and Herr Bremer are members of the same German Lutheran church. The Cassels, Herr Arndt, and Frau Jodel are members of the same German Catholic church. Frau Hanse is a member of an English-speaking Baptist church. Only three of the interviewed households, the Eisens, Klinks, and Herr Fleck, did not belong to a church.

Data collection.

Interviews were conducted from June 1992 to November 1992. The interviews were open-ended and relatively unstructured. An interview guide was used which contained the

main topics to be covered during the interview (see Appendix for an example of an interview guide). Patton describes the advantages of using an interview guide as "keeping the interaction focussed, but allowing individual perspectives and experiences to emerge". At the same time, an interview guide ensures that the same material is covered with all interviewees (Patton, 1987:111). Interviews were conducted in the immigrants' homes, except for the interviews with Herr Arndt, which were conducted in his office at work. Herr Arndt's home was located quite far away in an Edmonton suburb, and he requested to be interviewed in his office in downtown Edmonton. Conducting the interviews in the informants' homes proved to be quite important, because I was able to observe the home environment, and because the interviewees often pointed to specific items in their homes during their talk. Individual interviews lasted between one and two hours, often followed by a shared meal or a casual chat over a glass of wine or coffee. These more informal chats 'off the record' often gave me some valuable additional insight into the immigrants' experiences. In this regard, my longterm, personal relationship with the Giebers, and to some extent with the Hanses, allowed for some additional insight into these families' experiences.

Interviewees Cassel, Flick, Gieber, Jodel and Klink permitted me to tape the interviews. In the other cases, I took more or less extensive notes during the interviews and

completed the fieldnotes from memory at home, directly after the interview. I visited most of the interviewees a second time, asking more questions and clarifying some of their answers. During and after my visits, I also took notes on my observations of the home environment, as for example the decoration, or the food and drink I was served.

The interviewees were generally very cooperative and enthusiastic participants. Goward points out that the interviewees' motivations for participation, as well as their idea of the study and the researcher, can influence the study (Goward,1984:101). The immigrants' motivations to participate were quite varied. All interviewees have an interest in their German heritage. Some interviewees, such as Frau Gieber and Hanse, probably also had a personal interest in helping me with my study. I also had the impression that those interviewees who lived alone (Herr Bremer and Frau Jodel) welcomed an opportunity to talk about their life experiences with a patient listener.

The atmosphere during the interviews was always friendly and open. The interviews often included lively discussions concerning the research topic. The interviewees were generally as interested in my opinions and experiences as I was in theirs. It often appeared that the interviewees expected me to share their knowledge and interpretation of German and Canadian culture. Sometimes, the interviewees were surprised or even jokingly questioned my German background,

when I did not know a certain plant they used in their German cooking, or when I appeared ignorant about other aspects of German culture.

In five cases, the interviews were conducted with two or more members of the household. There are certainly advantages and disadvantages to group interviews. The presence of another member of the family may prevent an interviewee from speaking freely on the subject, and disagreements between the interview participants may not be voiced as readily. I generally felt that the group interview situation was beneficial, because one interviewee's answer to a question would stimulate the other person to voice his or her opinion as well. I also considered it difficult to request separate interviews with the various members of the household when everyone was present.

Analysis and Limitations.

Following a partial transcription of the interviews, each household's interviews were analyzed according to the main themes raised by the informants with regard to their expression of ethnicity in the home. The different households' responses were then compared and examined for possible patterns as well as idiosyncracies.

The themes of ethnic expression, as well as the degree to which ethnicity was expressed in the various households, was analyzed seperately for each one of the four categories in order to facilitate a comparison between these areas.

The presented data may be biased towards an emphasis on the contrast between 'Canadian' and 'German' culture. This bias results from my focus throughout the study on how and to what extent the interviewees expressed differences from other Canadians in their values, foodstyles, language, and use of material objects in the home. My emphasis is on the cultural boundaries between the German immigrants and other Canadians, as they are perceived by the German interviewees. Since I did not interview other Canadians with regard to their perception of German-Canadian home life, my approach may be seen as one-sided.

Another possible bias arises from the lack of extended participant observation. Because of the limited time available for this study, I did not spend an extensive amount of time inside each of the households. By living continuously for several months or more with the participants of the study, I might have noticed variations in ethnic identity expression throughout the year. An extensive period of participant observation would also have allowed me to observe possible differences between what people say they do, and their actual behaviour. In addition, extensive observation could have focussed on the differences between the individual

household members, leading to conclusions about gender and ethnicity.

A final limitation of this study is the small number of German immigrants selected. This too is a consequence of time restrictions.

CHAPTER FOUR

Ethnicity in Ten German Immigrants' Homes

Introduction.

In this chapter, I will illustrate how ten German immigrant households define their home as a German environment by living according to certain norms and values, through the use of language, by surrounding themselves with certain material things, and through distinct foodstyles. The ten households distinguish themselves from 'mainstream Canadians' to varying degrees. There is agreement as well as disagreement among the interviewees with regard to what is considered 'German', and how this is different from the lifestyle of other Canadians. Some immigrants maintain a certain aspect of German culture in their home very strongly, while they are open to Canadian influences in other respects.

The maintenance of German norms and values in the home.

Immigrant Arndt mentions that he now realizes that his most 'valuable possession' are the Christian values, the 'decent morals' he was brought up with in Germany and which he now attempts to pass on to his children. For Arndt, these

morals include faith in God, discipline and good work ethics, and generally a knowledge of 'what's right and what's wrong'. He considers these values as German, contrasting them with the Canadian way of life, which he believes to be characterized by 'moral decline' and an 'anti-religious attitude'. Immigrant Arndt feels that 'Canada is morally going to the dogs' and 'falling more and more into chaos'. Herr Arndt is becoming more and more disillusioned with the Canadian way of life and now sometimes wishes he had never come here. This feeling is especially increasing with a growing number of immigrants to Canada from countries with markedly different value systems than those he grew up with. Although Herr Arndt has tried to educate his children according to his values, he is concerned that he will lose or has already lost them to Canadian society. In the beginning of his stay in Canada, Herr Arndt did not incorporate his German heritage into his life in Canada. Herr Arndt mentions that at this time, he attempted to become fully integrated into Canadian culture and to leave his German heritage behind. He accepted Canadian citizenship, and associated largely with Canadians of other ethnic backgrounds in the beginning of his stay in Canada. Now he obviously attaches much greater importance to his German roots. He has almost exclusively German friends, and strongly identifies himself as a 'German'. Arndt's German-Canadian friends, many of them being members in the same German Catholic church which he

frequents, apparently have very similar views on Canadian society as Herr Arndt. He also keeps in close contact with his relatives and friends in Germany, which may reinforce his sense of belonging to the German culture and the desire to live according to German values and norms.

Herr Bremer has similar comments on the maintenance of German values as Herr Arndt. Bremer also lets Christian values guide his life. Being a very active member in a German-speaking congregation, Herr Bremer's religion is connected with German culture and with the German ethnic group. Bremer's friends and relatives go to the same church, and Herr Bremer's private life revolves around this quite close-knit group of German-Canadians. He finds it important to have a sense of 'hard and honest work', as well as a sense of 'order and direction' in his life. Evidently he feels that he has passed on these values to his children, whose economic and educational successes he praised at great length during the interview. Like Herr Arndt, Herr Bremer has very negative views regarding the Canadian way of life. He also considers Canada a non-religious place, and I had the impression that he considered Canadian society to be somewhat chaotic. Like Arndt, he particularly dislikes the presence of so many different ethnic groups which have values so different from his own. Herr Bremer wishes to maintain the German values he was brought up with in his home and his family. This concern is similar to Herr Arndt's fear of losing his children to

Canadian society. Bremer's children married Canadians of German origin, and he feels that the marriage of German-Canadians with members of other ethnic groups is the most important reason for the decline of the German culture in Canada. Herr Bremer expressed a strong sense of belonging to the German ethnic group, saying that he has 'remained a German and will die as a German'. He also stressed in this context that he still has German citizenship. Like Herr Arndt, Herr Bremer frequently visits Germany, and has recently also visited the now-Polish region where he grew up.

Immigrants Cassel also maintained that they lived a 'German lifestyle at home'. Unlike immigrants Arndt and Bremer, they were reluctant to define specific values which they lived by and passed on to their children. The Cassels mentioned, however, that they always stressed an interest in 'cultural things' at home. In this context, they referred mainly to an interest in theater, opera, German folk music, and classical music. The Cassels feel that they had to further this interest especially because they believe that 'there is no culture here in Canada'. Frau Cassel characterized Canadian culture as 'marshmallows and potatochips'. That the Cassels believe this interest in 'cultural things' to be particularly characteristic of Germans is implied by Frau Cassel's remark that 'it took a German to establish the first opera house in Edmonton'. Stressing their adherence to a German lifestyle in their

home, Herr Cassel said that they 'try to avoid the problem of introducing something Canadian into (their) home, because then the relatives and friends in Germany would say: There are the Canadians'. The Cassels visit Germany frequently, and evidently still judge their lifestyle by what their German relatives and friends consider to be appropriate. Their circle of friends here also consists almost exclusively of German-Canadian relatives or friends, most of whom are members in the same church which the Cassels go to. Immigrants Cassel's strong sense of belonging to the German ethnic group was expressed by Herr Cassel: 'We go along with the whole circus here, but in my heart I'll always remain a German'. Referring to the Canadian life as a 'circus' suggests that Herr Cassel thinks of Canada as a fairly strange or chaotic place. Similar notions were either directly or indirectly expressed by Herr Arndt and Herr Bremer. The Cassels also kept their German citizenship.

Immigrants Dietrich and Eisen both stressed very strongly that Germans have a different attitude towards work than people here in Canada. Similar to the views voiced by Arndt and Bremer, interviewees Dietrich and Eisen said that 'doing a thorough job with anything' and 'having a good attitude towards work' are norms they live by and which they try to pass on to their children. The Dietrichs told me about their children's academic successes, the awards and scholarships they had attained through hard work. Possibly

showing the results of his parents' education, Herr Eisen's son commented that Canadians are not disciplined enough and lazy. Both Herr Dietrich and Herr Eisen stressed that from their experience as tradespeople working with other Canadians, they found that Canadian workers are badly trained and do not have the right attitude towards work. Herr Eisen also felt that a major characteristic of the Canadian way of life is 'fast food, fast lane, fast everything'. In contrast, he describes the German way of doing things as slower, but more thorough. 'Fast food, fast lane, fast everything' may express the same general meaning as Frau Cassel's characterization of Canadian culture as 'marshmallows and potatochips', both connecting junk food with the Canadian way of life.

The Dietrichs' social circle consists almost exclusively of other German immigrants from their German-Canadian church, and the Dietrichs still feel that they are Germans, pointing out that they, as well as their children, retained German citizenship. The Dietrichs visit Germany almost every year, and would even like their children to attend university in Germany. Indicating their close connection to Germany, as well as a certain distance from the Canadian way of life, Frau Dietrich stated: 'If things get too crazy here, we can always go back'. This sense of life in Canada possibly becoming 'too crazy', may express a similar feeling as Herr Cassel's characterization of Canadian life as a 'circus'.

The Eisens are also quite conscious of leading a different lifestyle than other Canadians in their private sphere. Herr Eisen commented somewhat negatively on the presence of many ethnic groups in Canada, saying that life in Canada is not as social as life in Germany because people of different ethnic backgrounds have different interests. He gives the example of his Indian neighbour who 'would never be interested in the same things as we are'. However, unlike interviewees Arndt, Bremer, Cassel, and Dietrich, the Eisens are not interested in socializing with other Germans in Edmonton either. Frau Eisen criticizes that 'the Germans here do too much gossiping', and that 'there is an atmosphere full of envy and competition in the German clubs'. She concludes that 'Germans are against each other, not helpful, and don't stick together'. This was contrasted with their experience in Germany, where they felt a strong sense of community. The Eisens still identify themselves as 'Germans', and maintain strong ties to Germany through frequent visits and through retaining their German citizenship.

Of all the interviewees, immigrant Fleck probably expressed most strongly the adherence to German norms and lifestyle in his home, as well as a negative view of the norms of other Canadians. For Fleck, reliability, responsibility, discipline, and especially cleanliness are typically German attributes which he lives by. Evidently he does not feel that other Canadians commonly live by any of

these values. One of Fleck's reasons for participating in my interview was to arrange through me for a German person who would live in his home while he and his wife are on vacation in Germany. He felt that only a German would be reliable and clean enough to take care of his home. Fleck also mentioned that, as a landlord, he has had firsthand experience with the lack of responsibility and cleanliness of Canadians. Herr Fleck told me about incidents involving his tenants which he thought 'would never happen in Germany'. He also suggested that it must have been Germans who introduced the custom of taking your shoes off before entering a house in Canada. Although Germans in Germany commonly do not take their shoes off in any part of the home, Fleck suggested that they must have introduced it here 'because there is more dirt outside here'. Immigrant Fleck was the only interviewee who mentioned cleanliness as one of the German characteristics in the home. He also described himself as a 'cleanliness-fanatic', which suggests that he attributed his personal habit to his cultural upbringing. Interestingly, Herr Fleck has less contact with other German-Canadians than all the other interviewees. While his first wife was a German-Canadian, he is now married to a Canadian of Ukrainian background. He describes himself as a 'loner', and says that he almost never receives visitors in his home. Fleck asserts that he is still a German, also pointing out that he still has German citizenship. Since he does not have contact with other German

immigrants in Edmonton, his strong ties to the German culture are maintained exclusively through his frequent visits home. He and his wife go to Germany for three months every year, and Fleck has been thinking of moving back to Germany permanently.

Frau Gieber also maintained that they "live their life the same way as they did in Germany - only on Canadian soil". She mentioned that some of her relatives in Germany even thought that the Giebers were 'more German than the people in Germany'. This statement implies that the Giebers have maintained the lifestyle they had when they left Germany, while their relatives and other people in Germany are changing their way of life. While living at the Giebers' place, I also thought that their home seemed like an old-fashioned German household, in terms of the norms which they lived by, and also in terms of some material things displayed in the home. Christian values and guidelines for behaviour are very important in the Gieber household, but the Giebers do not seem to consider these values as particularly German. In contrast to interviewees Arndt, Bremer, Cassel, Dietrich, Eisen, and Fleck, who purposely wanted to keep their home German and viewed the norms of other Canadians somewhat negatively, the German atmosphere in the Giebers' house appears to be rather circumstantial, and the result of having practically no contact with the mainstream Canadian world in their professional or private lives. The Giebers do not

appear to set themselves apart from other Canadians in the same way as the six other households mentioned above. Frau Gieber says that she enjoys the freedom in Canada to 'do what one pleases'. She appreciates that people from all the various ethnic groups can continue to live the lifestyle they are accustomed to from their home countries. While she describes German norms as being quite restrictive and involving a lot of rules of conduct, she values the individual freedom and informality which she considers characteristic of the Canadian way of life. Frau Gieber remembers how she admired her Canadian-born nephews and nieces, who were already so independent as teenagers. In contrast to what Frau Gieber said earlier in the interview about 'living the same life as in Germany', she also claims that her family 'very quickly adapted to this new lifestyle', and that they liked this new freedom very much. Frau Gieber has a sense of being German and Canadian at the same time. Although she has kept her German citizenship and associates almost exclusively with other German immigrants from her church, Frau Gieber stresses that Germany is her first and Canada her second homeland. Although she frequently visits Germany, she soon becomes homesick for Canada when she is there.

Christian values are important in immigrant Hanse's household. Although Frau Hanse says that she now realizes that all her 'strength comes from her spiritual upbringing in

Germany', she does not appear to think of the norms her family lives by as being necessarily different from those of other Canadians. In fact, she says that it was through her membership in an English-speaking congregation in Canada that she attached increasing importance to the place of religion in her life. Frau Hanse now values her German roots very much, and 'did not deny her children of their German heritage', but she does not want to make her home into 'a little Germany'. She values the diversity of cultures in Canada as an enriching experience, and enjoys the freedom to choose one's own lifestyle. Although Frau Gieber and Frau Hanse have expressed similar views on maintaining German norms in their homes, Frau Hanse's home 'feels' considerably less 'German' than Frau Gieber's home. The Giebers and Hanses are neighbours and friends, and commented on each other's approach to keeping their German heritage. When Frau Gieber suggested Frau Hanse as a possible interviewee, she mentioned that Frau Hanse 'is a good Canadian...but she also has German things in her home'. Frau Hanse commented that she and Frau Gieber are very good friends, even though they have 'different views on these things'. It seems that Frau Gieber is Frau Hanse's only friend of German background. Frau Hanse says that she is 'definitely Canadian', although she has recently started to visit Germany quite frequently, rediscovering her roots and 'coming to peace with Germany'.

Frau Jodel described how, when the children were still at home, she used to run her home in the same way as her own mother in Germany did. This included a lifestyle based on religious values, as well as the strict supervision and disciplining of her children and certain rules of conversation and behaviour in the house. Frau Jodel said that there were, for example, exact rules concerning dinner table conversation, but only specified that 'nobody was allowed to swear'. Like interviewees Arndt, Bremer, and Cassel, Frau Jodel implied that it is more characteristic of Germans to be religious and to lead a decent and moral life. She thought that Canadian society was too commercial, and that that made them less concerned with 'the real meaning of their faith'. Although Frau Jodel has raised her children with a similar emphasis on discipline and rules as immigrant Fleck in particular, she appears to have adopted different norms for her own lifestyle. Frau Jodel stressed how much she prefers the Canadian 'free life'. She resents some of the German women in her congregation 'trying to tell (her) how to live (her) life'. She says that she is 'too old and has been living in Canada for too long to be told what to do'. Frau Jodel also said that 'Canadians have this saying, that you do in your own home as you please', and that she has adopted this motto for herself. Frau Jodel does not feel a strong connection with Germany, and only seldom visits her homeland. She has adopted Canadian citizenship, and says that she

'feels Canadian'. However, many of her close friends are other German immigrants from her German congregation.

Immigrants Klink said that when they first came over, they thought that they had to 'transplant (their) German culture to Canada'. The Klinks especially referred to the authoritarian and disciplinary manner of educating their children, and the existence of numerous rules in the house. About three years after they immigrated, they decided to change what they now call 'old-fashioned European-style ways'. The Klinks have become less authoritarian and have 'relaxed their lifestyle', mostly for the children's sake. They view their children as Canadians, and now feel that they should integrate the Canadian way of life into their homelife, so that 'the children do not grow up in two worlds'. They feel very strongly about this point, and comment negatively on those German immigrants they know, whose children 'never quite fit into Canadian society because they were raised to be German at home'. One aspect of Canadian culture which the Klinks do not want to adopt is the speed with which Canadians do things. Frau Klink makes a comment similar to that of Herr Eisen, by characterizing the Canadian way of life as 'fast food and fast solutions for everything'. The criticism of 'fast solutions' may relate to Dietrich's and Eisen's comments about the German way of 'doing things thoroughly'.

Table 1. Values

Informants:	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.	H.	J.	K.
Discipline and Order	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	
Work Ethics	X	X		X	X					
Faith in God	X	X							X	
Interest in Theater, Opera, etc.			X							
Doing things slowly and thoroughly					X					X
Reliability and responsibility						X				
Cleanliness						X				
Rules of Conduct									X	
Importance of German Heritage	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Speaking German in the home.

Immigrants Arndt, Bremer, Cassel, and Gieber speak almost exclusively German in the home. Since they speak German with their children as well as with their friends and most relatives, the only time these informants speak English in the home is when their in-laws or, in Cassels' case, their grandchildren are visiting. Immigrants Arndt, Bremer, Cassel, and Gieber commented negatively on some of their German-Canadian friends and relatives who do not speak German with their children at home. This attitude towards preserving the German language in their home is consistent with these immigrants' adherence to German values, possibly with the exception of Frau Gieber, who welcomes some aspects of the Canadian lifestyle.

Although Frau Gieber reads, writes, and understands English very well, she has considerable difficulties speaking English, even after living in Canada for over forty years. She describes herself as 'much less bilingual than her children'. Frau Gieber also refers to German as her 'dearest language'. Since Frau Gieber also commented negatively on Canadian church officials trying to 'push (them) into speaking English in their church', it appears that the maintenance of the German language in her home is very important to Frau Gieber. I have the impression that she

protects and maintains the German language more consciously in her household than German values.

Herr Arndt provided an example of keeping strict linguistic boundaries between his home and the outside world. The interview with Herr Arndt was held in English, although he knew that I am a native German speaker. Both interviews were held in his office at work, where he speaks English all the time. Evidently he considers his workplace, at least with regards to language, as exclusively English, while his home remains an almost exclusively German environment.

Frau Jodel also maintained that German was the only language spoken in her home among the immediate family. They felt that it was very important to teach their children German. Although Frau Jodel now speaks German with most of her close friends, she nevertheless has some friends from the neighbourhood and from her former job with whom she speaks English in her home. During the interview, she spoke a mix of English and German. With regards to language, as with regards to values, Frau Jodel appears to have placed more importance on keeping the home 'German' when her children were still at home.

Herr and Frau Dietrich mostly speak German with their two children. The Dietrichs' did not, however, seem quite so concerned with the maintenance of German as a home language as, for example, Frau Jodel, since they allow their children to respond in English. As a result, the Dietrich children are

not quite as fluent in German. During our interview, we spoke only German. The Eisens also appear to use English fairly often in their home. The Eisens' two children and one grandchild still live at home, and although Herr and Frau Eisen always speak German with each other, they sometimes speak English with their son and fairly often with their daughter. All family members mostly speak English with the three-year-old grandchild. During one of my visits, we spoke only English around the dinner table because the daughter's Canadian boyfriend was present. When I later talked alone with the son, however, he insisted on speaking German even though one of his Canadian friends had come over and was sitting with us. This resulted in an awkward situation, since we talked for almost one hour in German while his friend sat beside us, not being able to understand anything. I interpreted this incident as another example of his strong identification with German culture, which was apparent throughout the interview. Interestingly, both the son's friend and the sister's boyfriend were Chinese-Canadians and appeared to be quite close to the whole family. While Herr Eisen commented somewhat negatively on Canadian multiculturalism, suggesting that people of different ethnic groups could not really understand one another, the family nevertheless appears to open their doors to members of other ethnic groups.

The Klinks started out speaking only German in their home when they came to Canada. When Frau Klink wanted to learn English, the Klinks decided to speak only English upstairs and German downstairs in the house, symbolically dividing the home into a 'German' and an 'English' sphere. After some time, however, they felt that this was too contrived, and now they speak German and English, 'whatever comes out first'. This could be interpreted as a loosening of ethnic boundaries, a blending of Canadian and German influences, which was characteristic of the Klinks' home in general. However, the distinction between the home and the public Canadian environment was still expressed in the Klinks' preference for the English language in work-related conversation, while German was preferred for more private conversation. During our interview, we spoke mostly German.

The Hanses speak more English than German in the home. Although Frau Hanse speaks German and English with her husband, she speaks only English with her children who still live at home. Since the Hanses' close friends, except for Frau Gieber, are not of German background, they mostly speak English with their friends as well. The Hanses decided to speak English in their home because they feared that their children would 'get mixed up growing up with two languages', and also thought that speaking German would be 'unfair to the kids and the friends they brought home'. Frau Hanse mentioned that they 'got hassled so much from other German-Canadians

because (they) didn't speak German at home'. Frau Hanse now considers English 'the language of (her) heart'. She requested that we hold the interview in English, although she is equally fluent in German. While Herr and Frau Hanse often still speak German with each other, they probably do so out of habit, and not because they want to preserve the German language at home. On the contrary, with regard to language, the Hanses clearly do not wish to separate their home environment from the rest of Canadian society. For Frau Hanse, speaking English has even become part of her personal identity.

Interestingly, Herr Fleck, who most strongly distinguished his own lifestyle and values from those of other Canadians, is the only interviewee who speaks exclusively English in his home. In contrast to the Hanses, however, Herr Fleck's use of English seems to be motivated purely by practical considerations, and not by his preference for the English language. His wife does not speak German and he has neither much contact with his children, nor with any other German-speaking people. He used to speak only German in his home during his first marriage to a German-Canadian, and I therefore assume that he would also speak German in his home now, if his wife understood German. His preference for German was clear during the interviews, when he insisted on speaking German, even though his wife complained that she did not understand anything. Although he has not spoken much

German over the last seventeen years, his German was very fluent.

Table 2. Language

Informants:	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.	H.	J.	K.
English only						X				
German only	X	X	X				X			
German with family									X	
Parents speak German, children often respond in English.				X						
Parents and children speak German and English.					X					X
Parents speak German with each other and English with children.								X		

German items in the home.

Immigrant Fleck is as conscious of keeping his home German in terms of material things, as he is conscious of maintaining German norms and a German lifestyle in general. Fleck maintains that he buys German things as much as possible because he feels that they are of better quality and because he feels a certain pride in German-made things. The kitchen machines, the stereo system, dishes, cutlery, the drapes, and even the dish towels and his wife's aprons are from Germany or German import products from Edmonton. One of Fleck's hobbies is gardening. Almost all of his gardening tools were brought over from Germany, even though they are more expensive there. Pointing to some broken tools, he claims that the tools one can buy here tend to break easily. Herr Fleck says that when he looks through his old photographs from Germany or listens to the old records, he is sometimes so emotionally touched that he starts to cry, adding that he is usually not at all sentimental. In Herr Fleck's house, the basement, kitchen, and garage are the areas which are marked as a German space through the material objects displayed within them. Frau Fleck, who is not a German-Canadian, showed me those objects which connected her most strongly with Germany. They were souvenir plates and other souvenir items displayed in a glass cabinet in the living room. Herr Fleck, however, did not consider these

things as important aspects of his ethnicity, referring to them as 'just some junk'. He added that they never use the living room, and that the living room is 'just for show'. The Flecks only use the living room to entertain guests with whom they do not have a close relationship. I was apparently not considered to be in this category of visitors, since we always sat in the kitchen during the interviews and meals. There were no other German items in the living room. The Flecks' home is divided into a public and a private space. In the public living room space, the Flecks represent their ethnicity in the form of easily recognizable symbols, such as the souvenir plates. These items are probably more meaningful for non-Germans, such as Frau Fleck. However, in the more private space of the kitchen and basement, Herr Fleck keeps those things which connect him most strongly with his German heritage.

Immigrant Bremer's whole house seemed to be a showcase of his German heritage. In the hallways, stairwells, and the living room, the walls were decorated with woodcuts, drawings, and paintings of German landscapes or town scenes. Since Bremer came to Canada with almost nothing, he acquired these things on later trips to Germany. I also noticed a few things, such as embroidered sofa cushions, carved candles, and certain types of crystal and china in his living room, which were similar to those I had seen in other German households and in the German import stores. For some reason,

Herr Bremer did not want to talk much about these things. He appeared to become quite defensive when I asked him about the things displayed in his home, at one point asking me what exactly it was that I had come to see him about. For Bremer, the old photographs and pictures of his relatives and his homeland were obviously the most important aspect of his heritage displayed in his home. He immediately suggested that we go to his basement, where he had two rooms decorated with photographs and pictures from his past. He spent much time telling me stories, which appeared to be quite vivid in his memory. More than any of the other interviewees, Herr Bremer appeared to 'live in the past', possibly because he is the oldest of the immigrants I interviewed. Herr Bremer almost exclusively talked about his life in the former Germany, using the photographs as illustrations for his stories. This focus on his life in Germany is also evident in his recently written autobiography, in which he only devotes a few pages to the forty years he lived in Canada.

Like Herr Fleck, immigrants Cassel 'try to buy German products as much as (they) can'. When I asked them why they preferred German products, Frau Cassel seemed surprised at my question, saying 'well, of course, they are much better quality'. Immigrants Cassel specified that they especially buy German electronic equipment, crystal, cutlery, and dishes. Frau Cassel also argued that Canadians do not know what 'Gemuetlichkeit' is, and that it is therefore difficult

to get certain things which make the home cozy, such as nice candles or 'certain handcrafted, tasteful things'. She points out some candles which she brought over from Germany, as well as an arrangement of dried flowers from Germany, commenting that Canadian flower decorations are 'not so skillfully done' and 'quite unimaginative'. Frau Cassel said that she usually gets presents for her friends and relatives in Canada from a German import store. Pointing to the photographs and posters of their German hometown and relatives on the dining room wall, Frau Cassel jokingly commented: 'All our German heritage is pinned up on that wall'. Unlike Herr Bremer, who keeps his most treasured memories hidden away in the basement, the Cassels thought that the dining room was the most appropriate spot for these photographs, because they sit there together three times a day and therefore spend a lot of time in that room.

Like immigrants Fleck and Cassel, the Dietrichs have German things in their home, partly because they think that German-made things are of superior quality. The Dietrichs prefer to buy German products, often directly in Germany during one of their frequent visits. With pride, Frau Dietrich points out the VW van they only recently acquired. The pride in and preference for German-made things, and the desire to have German things around the home, can be related to the Dietrich's notions regarding German and Canadian attitudes towards work in general. Some German things are

inherited and have a more sentimental value of connecting the Dietrichs to their heritage. The Dietrichs still use their inherited dishes, tablecloths, and silverware on a regular basis.

Frau Gieber says about herself and some of the other German-Canadian families she knows that 'it seems that we just need these familiar things around us for our well-being'. She describes how in the first difficult years in Canada, she experienced a feeling of being at home in her German friends' houses 'with all the beautiful handcrafted things, and with a little bit of embroidery...they had such a personal feeling'. Frau Gieber's own home is now filled with handcrafted decorations, homemade blankets, cushions, and tablecloths. Frau Gieber still likes making these things herself, and when I lived at her place, she showed me how to sew blankets and some other things. Over the years, Frau Gieber has brought so many things from her mother's home in Germany that she now says 'I don't need to buy Canadian things because I've got everything already'. In contrast to Herr Fleck and the Cassels, however, Frau Gieber did not seem to accumulate German things in her home because of a pride in their quality. She, much like Herr Bremer, seems to consider the personal memories connected with these objects as most important. Frau Gieber mentioned that there is a story connected with every piece of decoration in her livingroom. One thing she would perhaps like to have in her home is what

she calls an 'ancestral gallery' such as the one Herr Bremer had in his basement. She thinks that this would make one feel even more at home and remind a person of his or her roots.

Immigrants Eisen brought almost everything over from Germany when they immigrated in the early 1970s. Except for a few new acquisitions, their home actually looks very similar to the one they left in Germany. At the time, it was cheaper to transport everything here than to buy new things in Canada. Accordingly, they brought German things into their home out of economic considerations, not because they wanted their home to look German. However, after they arrived in Canada, they were apparently very glad to have brought everything with them because 'there was hardly any well-made furniture here and even drapes and things were hard to find'. Frau Eisen says that now there is no problem with getting good quality and nice things here, because they have a lot of European import products in Canada.

Immigrants Klink described a situation similar to that of the Eisens. Herr Klink says that 'everything' in their house is from Germany. They also took everything with them when they immigrated. In contrast to the Eisens, immigrants Klink did not do this because of economic considerations. One year before the Klinks came to Alberta, they visited Edmonton to examine the availability of furniture and other home-related products and found the selection as well as the quality of the goods insufficient for their needs. Like the

Eisens, informants Klink now think that they can get everything they like here in Edmonton because of the increase in European imports. This suggests, however, that they still have a preference for European, if not German, things in the home.

Consistent with Frau Hanse's openness to Canadian influences regarding general lifestyle and language is her assertion that 'styles and everything are mixed' in their home. However, Frau Hanse does consider the German things in her home important for her well-being. The Hanses have drawings of their German home towns hanging on the walls in their family room in the basement, which she feels are important because they 'remind her of where she comes from'. Frau Hanse especially treasures one drawing of her home town, which she ordered and received from Germany only last year. She also values the dishes, silverware, and also many books and things like tablecloths, which she brought over from Germany and which according to her as well as to her children stand for their German heritage and culture. Frau Hanse feels that the books are the most important connection with her German heritage. Many of her inherited things she has already given to her daughters. Frau Hanse says that her daughter Brigitte 'has lots of German things, like lace tablecloths, which do not only connect her to her ancestry, her heritage, but also goes together and reminds her of all the other German things she likes, like the sausages, and Sauerkraut,

and all that Southern German food'. Although Frau Hanse does not mention that she still prefers buying German things, she nevertheless states that she has 'always had a very definite taste in things, very much influenced by (her) German upbringing'. She and her neighbour, Frau Gieber, discuss various patterns and designs for needlework, and, according to Frau Hanse, they both 'exactly know and agree on what is acceptable and what isn't, what is kitsch and what isn't' because of their similar upbringing. The 'mixed styles' in Frau Hanse's home mainly seem to be the result of her children's influence, since she describes her own taste as 'German'. Hanse's house is, for example filled with sculptures by one of the daughters, whose art shows definite Asian influence.

Frau Jodel says she has some inherited china, silverware, and tablecloths from Germany, but many of her things she has already given away to her children. Her living room, she points out, is decorated and furnished in Italian style because of her husband's taste for Italian things. Frau Jodel does not make a point of buying German things, and, partly due to her living in the downtown area, she also does not frequent the German stores on the Southside very much. Frau Jodel mentions the bazaars at her church, where women sell their handcrafted things, and she says that 'the Germans are very good at crafts'. She does not, however, appear to get involved with the craft sale in her church. The way in

which she made this comment also suggests that she views herself as quite separate from 'the Germans'. Interestingly, Frau Cassel, who is a good friend of Frau Jodel, maintained that she could tell where Frau Jodel was from just by looking at the Bavarian landscape painting on her livingroom wall. As far as I could see, this painting was the only reference to her German background in Frau Jodel's 'Italian-style' living room.

Herr Arndt evidently does not consider the accumulation and display of German things an important aspect of the expression of ethnic identity in his home. Herr Arndt maintained that aside from a few photographs of his family, a painting of his home town in his living room, and some German folk music records, 'there isn't much German in (his) house. Herr Arndt said that he came to Canada in the fifties with only a little money and a few family photographs in his suitcase. He also thought that his financial situation allows him now to buy anything he wishes, and that he 'has become spoiled in terms of material things'. He therefore does not 'feel the need' to keep many German things in the home. In Herr Arndt's view, those immigrants who are not quite as well off financially tend to keep a lot of traditional German things in their homes. Herr Arndt describes his lifestyle as rather luxurious, and he obviously feels that German things are not necessarily part of that lifestyle. This contrasts with the Arndt's efforts in other respects, namely language

and values to live by, to maintain a German atmosphere in their home.

Table 3. Material Items

Informants:	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.	F.	G.	H.	J.	K.
German-made products			X	X	X	X				X
Paintings and drawings from Germany	X	X	X					X	X	
Photos of family and home in Germany	X	X	X							
Handcrafted items			X				X			
Inherited items			X				X	X	X	

German Foodstyles.

Consistent with Herr Fleck's preference for German things in his home is his maintenance of German foodstyles. In the beginning of the interview, Fleck said: 'We live German-style...we eat German-style', stressing the importance of German food for his German lifestyle. Fleck plants all kinds of vegetables and herbs in his garden which his wife needs for her German cooking. When I did not know one of the cabbage types he showed me in his garden, Fleck commented that I could not be a 'real German' if I did not know this cabbage. He was similarly disappointed that I did not know all the different varieties of potatoes. Fleck takes his favorite potatoes with him from Germany every two years to be able to plant them in his garden. Although his wife had no connection with the German culture before she met Herr Fleck, and still says that she '(doesn't) really know what German culture really is', she now prepares only German food. Some dishes she learned from Herr Fleck's sister in Germany, and they brought many German cookbooks, which Herr Fleck sometimes has to translate for his wife. From one of the bakeries, the Flecks order special German bread, without which Herr Fleck claims he 'could not live'. They often buy imported German foods, as well as meat and baking goods from the German food stores. Herr Fleck stressed that he does not produce much waste in general and in his kitchen in

particular. Herr Fleck thought that producing much waste and wasting food was typical of the Canadian lifestyle. In this connection, Fleck criticized the amount of garbage his neighbours put out every week.

Though Herr Arndt is not concerned with creating a German atmosphere in his home through the display of material things, he considers it very important to eat German-style food. Herr Arndt's love of German cooking was one of the reasons for his marrying a woman of German background after he immigrated to Canada. Herr Arndt describes dinner invitations in his home as an essential component of maintaining friendships with his German-Canadian friends. They often get together, eating German food and sometimes singing German folksongs after the meal. As with the other interviewees, German-style food is for Arndt the local food tradition of his former home in Germany. Herr Arndt said that they always eat with fork and knife, but he did not emphasize this as a particularly German custom, nor did he consider any other food-related custom in his home as specifically German.

For Herr Bremer, German food is also essential for his well-being. Since his wife passed away, however, he sometimes goes to a German restaurant to eat German food, or he is invited to his daughter's home. When I visited him, Herr Bremer served me German wine and sweets, and gave me a package of German pralines to eat at home, with the remark that I 'probably don't get real German chocolates very

often'. Except for maintaining that he eats German food most of the time, Herr Bremer did not mention anything about food-related customs. Since recently, Herr Bremer lives alone and does not do much cooking or eating of major meals in his home. Therefore, his adherence to German food traditions is only expressed to a limited extent in his home.

The Cassels maintained that they eat German food, which Frau Cassel described as 'Sauerbraten and noodles'. Frau Cassel says that the only Canadian food she has sometimes made is 'raw vegetables with dip' when she had guests over for the evening, adding that 'that's only a snack...it's not real food'. Frau Cassel used to grow certain vegetables and herbs in her garden which she found difficult to get here, such as fresh peas, or which she felt were of poor quality in the stores. Now, the gardening has become too much work for her. Like Herr Fleck, the Cassels prefer to buy German food products. However, since recently, the Cassels do not drive a car anymore, and therefore cannot shop at the German stores as much as they used to.

The Dietrichs, like the Cassels, usually cook German-style food and like to buy German food products because 'they taste better'. The Dietrichs regularly shop in the German grocery stores on the Southside, especially for meat and baking products. Frau Dietrich showed me her large flower and vegetable garden, pointing out numerous herbs and vegetables, such as Maggikraut and cale, which she uses for her German

cooking. Evidently, her garden is a major component of her ethnic foodstyle, which was also the case with Herr Fleck and Frau Cassel. Like Herr Bremer, Frau Dietrich also wanted me to take something 'German' home with me, and gave me some Maggikraut to 'put in my soup'.

The Eisens buy meat from the German butcher for whom Frau Eisen works. They do not usually shop at any other German food stores or in the import sections of Canadian supermarkets, because they find the German products quite expensive. Frau Eisen does prepare mostly German meals from her home region in Germany. She makes most dishes herself 'from scratch', using few canned and frozen goods. Contrasting his family's lifestyle with that of other Canadians, her son said that his Canadian friends frequently order pizzas, and that his friends' mothers are often 'too lazy to cook'. Frau Eisen also defined eating with fork and knife as a distinct German custom.

Frau Hanse mainly cooks her southern German dishes at home. For certain things, such as sausages or bread and other baking products, she frequents German stores or import sections in Canadian stores. Frau Hanse also likes to use fresh ingredients, many of which the Hanses grow in their garden. Although, for example, Frau Gieber and Herr Fleck describe the use of homegrown fruits and vegetables as a typically German tradition, Frau Hanse is not so sure about this, since 'many other Canadians have gardens as well'. Frau

Hanse also likes to 'make things herself' instead of using prepared foods. However, unlike Frau Cassel, she does not contrast this with a 'Canadian way of eating'. Except for the 'fast food', Frau Hanse has nothing against eating 'Canadian' or other ethnic food in her home, but she finds it 'only natural' to cook German food, since she grew up with that taste and she learned how to prepare those meals. Frau Hanse did not mention any other food-related tradition in her home which she thought of as particularly German. However, in Frau Hanse's home, the eating of German foods is probably the most obvious expression of ethnic identity.

Frau Gieber appears to pay no particular attention to cooking German-style in the home, although she does prepare those Swabian foods which she especially likes, such as Spaetzle and a variety of cakes and cookies. Frau Gieber is quite open to trying other ethnic foods, and sometimes prepares Chinese food or pizza. Unlike the other interviewees, Frau Gieber orders or picks up ready-made food, such as chicken pieces and 'pizza-to-go'. She attaches no stigma to prepared foods and freezer products, which she considers to be more typical of the Canadian way of eating. Instead, she welcomes their practicality, their variety, and their nutritional value. Although the Giebers sometimes buy German products, such as a certain type of bread, it is not a matter of principle. Frau Gieber stresses the informality with which meals are taken in her home. The various members